



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY NEWS RELEASE

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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DTSC Accepts Georgia Pacific site

SACRAMENTO - The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board today announced that DTSC will assume the lead environmental regulator role overseeing cleanup and remediation of the 445-acre Georgia Pacific mill site in Mendocino County. "We will work with the Regional Water Board as well as other environmental regulators who are concerned about the remediation, cleanup and future use of this site," said DTSC Director Maureen Gorsen. "The challenges presented at this site warrant a thorough review and analysis by all environmental regulators. We will coordinate our efforts and work together," Gorsen added.

In assuming the lead regulatory role, DTSC will work closely with the Regional Water Board to ensure that cleanup activities fully comply with the Regional Water Board's permits and requirements. In an Aug. 11, 2005 memo, DTSC confirmed that it would accept the lead environmental regulator role. "... DTSC will assume lead agency oversight for future site investigation and remedial activities. Your staff has been extremely cooperative and supportive in making the transition as smooth as possible. Their knowledge of the site will continue to be an invaluable source of information into the future."

"We are pleased that DTSC has accepted the lead for this site, since the primary focus of this clean up is potential human health issues related to surface soil contamination. We will support DTSC as water quality issues arise," said Catherine Kuhlman, executive officer of the North Coast Water Board. "This is another example of two Cal/EPA agencies working together to benefit the public and the environment," Kuhlman added.

The Georgia Pacific sawmill began operations in 1885. Operations at the sawmill, which closed in November 2002, eventually spanned 445 acres in the Fort Bragg area, west of Highway 1 along the Pacific Ocean. Investigations at the site have found dioxins in the soil, as well as methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE), and petroleum products in the groundwater.

The Regional Water Board has overseen remediation activities at the Georgia Pacific site since 2003. In a 2005 letter to DTSC the Regional Water Board requested that DTSC assume the lead environmental regulatory role because data and testing at the site "indicates that issues related to human health and exposure need to be addressed." The letter also cited the California Environmental Protection Agency's selection guideline contained in the 2001 Memorandum of Agreement on Oversight of Investigation and Cleanup at Brownfield sites. The document states that DTSC should be the lead oversight agency for environmental cleanup "if the primary concern is risk posed to human health."

More information on the Georgia Pacific site can be found on DTSC's Web site in the EnvirStor database at: <http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov>

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The Department of Toxic Substances Control is a department of the California Environmental Protection Agency. DTSC's mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.

The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board is one of nine regional boards reporting to the State Water Board and the California Environmental Protection Agency. Among its duties, the Water Board sets region wide water quality standards and activity-specific waste discharge requirements, enforces both federal and state water quality statutes, regulates cleanup of sites

which pose an immediate or potential threat to water quality and educates the public on water quality issues.